

Patricia Gomes – Two Poems

My Summer with Brando

Stanley Kowalski —
I met him on a steamy
August night in 1968
by the flickering blue light
of channel five's
Movies All Night.

He stood
(which would have been enough
for me)
he stood there

rippling.

I had never seen
a person ripple before.
He was meaty,
thick —
a lumper, a longshoreman, an iron worker.
He was
Oh, sweet Jesus—what is this?
This
was not
DavyJonesMickeyDolenzBobbySherman;
this was
dangerous.

With my eyes bulging,
my nostrils flared,
I watched Streetcar without blinking,
without breathing,
as this Animal
mumbled,
sweated,
burped,
scratched his privates,
and

rippled.

Okay, so maybe it *was*
my twelve-year old hormones
kicking in,
but my heart was beating so hard
I thought my ears would bleed!
This was
foreign —
treacherously foreign.
The curling sneer of his full lips,
the brooding eyes ...
I wanted to
compose a symphony
on the spot for big, sweaty men.
Intense:
simple movements a veritable ballet
of intensity, of passion.
(Could his jeans have been *any* tighter!)
And it did not matter that he took advantage of that delicate magnolia—
she had it coming.
Oh, we gals are hard on our own kind. It did not matter
because his heart was true,
his heart
belonged to
STELLAAAAA!
She was his woman,
Mama,
savior.

The summer of Brando changed me.
Since that moment,
that steamy August night,
every man
in my life is measured
by the Brando yardstick,
from Stanley
to Don Vito ...
God help them all.

"What are you rebelling against, Johnny?"
"Whadda ya got?"

The Enchantment of Glass

She
keeps fourteen butterflies
blown of wafer-thin glass,

mounted on delicate bamboo stakes
in a Mexican clay vase
facing the dining room window.
When the light of late morning
hits their wings, the explosion of color
is as breathtaking
as the Rainbow Mountains of the Andes,
a place you know you'll never visit,
ground you're certain you'll never walk on.

But you won't have to.

It's here, not far from home,
hidden
in the rocky crunch
of a traditional New England village
behind tall pines and overgrown holly.

And when the light, that late morning light
illuminates those fourteen pair of wings,
in this magical place,
you're gifted with crimson, gold, emerald,
orange and a blue so blue
a name for it has yet to be thought of,
for no such blue has existed before.

And when the sunlight, that late morning sunlight
illuminates those fourteen pair of wings,
her daughter is alive again. Alive
and young, filled with an indescribable light
of her own.
Breathing, laughing, dancing
behind a closed door just two rooms away,
listening to a silly Cindy Lauper song
while singing with a hairbrush microphone.

They keep her here, those fourteen glass butterflies,
Hold her to this magical place
hidden and steadfast
behind the tall pines and overgrown holly.
Here, in the rocky crunch
of the traditional New England village
where there are conch shells,
Moroccan tapestries, and dainty Japanese tea sets,
from places you know you'll never visit,
ground you're certain you'll never walk on,

she
is a mother still
with a daughter dancing, laughing, breathing
behind a closed door just two rooms away.

Poet Laureate of New Bedford, Massachusetts from 2014 to 2021, author and playwright **Patricia Gomes** is published in numerous literary journals and anthologies, including the New England Horror Writers Anthologies, *Wicked Women* and *Wicked Creatures*. A Pushcart Prize nominee in 2008, 2018 and 2021, and twice nominated for a Rhysling Science Fiction award, Gomes is the author of four chapbooks. Ms. Gomes recent publications include *Tidings*, *Star*Line*, *Muddy River Poetry Review*, *Motif Magazine*, *Alien Buddha Press*, and *Apex and Abyss*. Ms. Gomes is the co-founder of the GNB Writers Block as well a member of the Massachusetts Poetry Society, the SciFi Poetry Association, New England Horror Writers, the Horror Writers Association.